GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
AGRICULTURE
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:11
ANSWERED ON:19.11.2001
STARVATION DEATHS
AVSM, BRIG.(RETD.) KAMAKHYA PRASAD SINGH DEO;SUSHIL KUMAR SAMBHAJIRAO SHINDE

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware of the starvation deaths in some States particularly in Orissa;

(b) if so, the number of such cases noticed during the current year;

(c) whether starvation and near starvation related deaths were not confined merely to Orissa but had manifested in various forms of suicides by farmers, cash crop growers, weavers and malnutrition deaths in Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh as well;

(d) if so, whether the Government have sent any study team to any states or conducted any inquiry into the matter;

(e) if so, the outcome thereof;

(f) whether the Union and State Governments have failed to implement the Supreme Court`s directives in this regard;

(g) if so, the reasons therefor;

(h) the total foodgrain stocks rotting in different Government warehouses and stores as on October 31, 2001; and

(i) the steps taken/being taken to utilize foodgrain stock properly, merge and integrate all employment generating schemes like food for work and self employment programme and prevent such starvation deaths in future?

Answer

MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI AJIT SINGH)

(a) to (i): A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFFERED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO
(i) OF LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 11 DUE FOR REPLY ON 19TH NOVEMBER, 2001.

(a), (b), (f) & (g): The Government of Orissa have strongly denied allegations of`starvation deaths`. This subject is currently sub-judice in a Public Interest Litigation,People`s Union for Civil Liberties versus Union of India and others, Writ Petition (Civil)No.196 of 2001 wherein such allegations have been denied by the States. Department of Food and Public Distribution which is representing the Union of India in the said case has already filed a Statement indicating compliance with the Interim Directions of the Honourable Court.

(c) to (e): No case of suicide by farmers, etc. due to starvation has been reported by other States also.

(h): As per information furnished by the Department of Food and Public Distribution, thetotal stock of foodgrains with the Food Corporation of India and the State agencies stoodat 582.80 lakh MTs on as 1.10.2001. 27.65 lakh MTs of foodgrains have been allotted free of cost to various drought/flood affected States for Food for Work Programme.

(i): The recently approved Sampoorna Grameen Rozgar Yojana (SGRY) also seeks toprovide wage employment (with cash and foodgrains components) and a quantity of 50 lakh MTs of foodgrains has been earmarked for the purpose, to be provided to States free of cost. This scheme envisages merger of various schemes with employment generation potential.